

# THANKSGIVING

## Proclamations of Our Presidents



Washington who set the precedent for Thanksgiving Proclamations from an old print

### The Evolution of Thanksgiving Documents from George Washington's Quill Pen Proclamation to President Wilson's Call to Thanksgiving Written By Himself On a Typewriter.

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OUR Thanksgiving Day belongs to all the people of our land, of whatever creed or race. Every one can in his own way offer up his prayer of gratitude for the blessings which he has enjoyed and for the national prosperity and growth which is her common heritage with his fellowman. The citizens of the United States will have occasion to be especially grateful this year, not so much for the increase of our country in material things, but that through the guidance of an all-wise Providence we have escaped the ravages of war and are today at peace with all the world.

Once a year the President issues a proclamation asking the people to lay aside their labor and give thanks. The day selected for that purpose is the last Thursday in November—a date set many years ago and followed by each Chief Executive. While there is a deal of sameness in all Thanksgiving proclamations, platitudes, brief or extended, characterize the larger portion of them, occasionally a new thought may be injected or reference made to something of particular national importance.

#### Originated in Holland.

As early as 1575 the people of Leyden, Holland, observed a day of thanksgiving and prayer, and as the first New England colonists, the Pilgrims were twelve years in Holland before sailing for America, there is no doubt that the idea of a day of thanksgiving took root in their hearts. After they had harvested their first crop in Amer-



Lincoln who wrote the most pathetic Thanksgiving Proclamation from an old print

How President Wilson signs his Thanksgiving Proclamation

ica in 1621, Governor Bradford ordered a day of thanksgiving, and thus the Day of Thanks became a part of our national life. The Dutch Governors of New Amsterdam took up the custom and days of thanksgiving were appointed by them from time to time. During the Revolution the Continental Congress ordered a day of thanksgiving each year.

#### Washington's Proclamation Modern.

When George Washington became President in 1789 both Houses of Congress recommended that he issue a proclamation for a day of prayer and thanksgiving. This he did, setting aside Thursday, November the twenty-sixth, as the day. The document was a long one and suggested thanks for the enjoyment of "civil and religious liberty," the new Constitution and the Constitutional Laws honestly and faithfully observed. The next Thanksgiving proclamation was sent out by Washington in 1795, and is not unlike those of the present day. In this he recommends to the people the giving of thanks to God for Constitutions which establish law and order, and for prayer that the land may be a safe asylum for the unfortunate of other countries. He begged that people establish habits of sobriety, order, morality and purity. He also declared that the nation should give thanks for its condition when it reviewed the calamities which had afflicted other nations. He also gives thanks for the suppression of the

#### Whiskey Insurrection in Pennsylvania.

In May, 1798, John Adams set aside a day of prayer and fasting on account of the unfriendly disposition, conduct and demands of a foreign power evinced by repeated refusals to receive messengers of reconciliation and peace "on account of depredations on our commerce and the infliction of injuries on very many of our fellow-citizens while engaged in their lawful business on the high seas." He implored the mercy and benediction of Heaven for our country. The country to which he referred was France.

James Madison's proclamation was similar in character when he set aside the third Thursday in August as a day of "humiliation and prayer," on account of our war with England. A year later he issued another Thanksgiving proclamation in which he implored an all-wise Providence to stop the tactics of the British in their burning of our public building at the national capital. After peace had been declared Madison proclaimed the second Thursday in April, 1815, as a day to give thanks for the peace that had once more dawned upon the nation.

#### Lincoln's Sorrowful Words.

From 1815 to 1861 there were no Thanksgiving proclamations issued by the Presidents of the United States, but during this interval the Governors of the New England States set apart days of Thanksgiving. During the

early days of the Civil War President Lincoln fixed the last Thursday in September as a day for the nation to pray for the restoration of peace. Other proclamations of a like character were issued during his administration. These documents were all beautifully worded and showed a deeper and more sorrowful note than those of any other Chief Executive. He referred to the fact that the Almighty had seen fit to scourge the country with war, and suggested in the most gentle and pathetic wording that the day of thanksgiving should be devoted to prayer for the success of the Union cause.

#### Brought About By A Woman.

After the battle of Gettysburg in July, 1863, Mrs. Sarah J. Hale, the editor of the famous "Godey's Lady's Book," wrote to President Lincoln enclosing a copy of Washington's Thanksgiving Proclamation and suggested that he, too, should proclaim a day of National Thanksgiving. Mrs. Hale had long desired that the Governors of other States should follow the example of those of New England, and even before the Civil War she had written annually to the Governors of the States begging them to proclaim a Thanksgiving Day. In 1859 she had succeeded with all but two Governors. During the war, however, the custom lagged, and finally at the close of the conflict Mrs. Hale took up the matter with the President, who acted upon her suggestion and proclaimed a Thanksgiving Day. He regretted that it had been necessary to take up the sword and rejoiced at its brief duration. A year later he made reference to the conclusion of peace with Spain and of the troubles in the Philippines. In 1900 the extension of our commerce and of our



How President Johnson signed his Thanksgiving Proclamation

President Johnson's proclamation was short and contained a suggestion that thanks be offered because "the Civil War had not reopened; also because foreign intervention ceased to excite alarm." In the year of his impeachment, 1868, he expressed the hope for harmony and the forgetting of political and sectional dissensions.

#### Grant Speaks Of Civil War.

General Grant's proclamation in 1869 still savored of the Civil War when he prayed for the restoration of the people as a nation and hoped that the marks of the past conflict had been obliterated. In 1878 he asked the people to pray that the lingering results of the civil strife would soon pass away. Two years later he dwelt upon the wisdom and beauty of the Thanksgiving in our country. A year later, Centennial Year, 1876, President Grant called for a special Thanksgiving on July 4th.

The four proclamations of President Hayes are similar, as in each he dwelt especially upon the excellent crops and the fact that we were at peace with all the world.

Just after President Garfield's death in 1881, Chester A. Arthur made a pathetic reference to the nation's loss in the death of Garfield. A year later he begged the people to give to charity on Thanksgiving Day—a suggestion which has been made in proclamations of later Presidents.

Grover Cleveland recommended that the day be one for family reunions as well as of prayer. When Benjamin Harrison became the Chief Executive he proclaimed a special day of thanksgiving on April 30, 1889, to commemorate the centennial anniversary of our Government. His Thanksgiving Proclamations were similar to those of the preceding Chief Executives.

#### McKinley And The Spanish War.

The always gentle and much beloved McKinley in 1898 varied from the conventional form by referring to the Spanish-American War. He regretted that it had been necessary to take up the sword and rejoiced at its brief duration. A year later he made reference to the conclusion of peace with Spain and of the troubles in the Philippines. In 1900 the extension of our commerce and of our



President Roosevelt signing his 1906 Thanksgiving Proclamation

power and influence in the cause and enlightenment of the distant seas and lands were the themes of his proclamation. He also referred to the Boxer troubles in China.

When Roosevelt became President his first Thanksgiving proclamation contained a reference to the assassination of President McKinley when he wrote—"This Thanksgiving finds the people still bowed with sorrow for the death of a great and good President."

Each year of his official tenure he injected something original in the document. For instance, in 1904, just as he was about to be elected President, he wrote, "Reward has been given to us and much will be expected of us."

#### Wilson Writes On Typewriter.

President Wilson usually spends less than an hour in writing the document, and perhaps another hour in polishing up a line here and there that does not suit his keenly analytical mind which has such a wonderful regard for word values. His first proclamation was remarkable in many ways. It was the first Democratic Thanksgiving Proclamation in twenty years and was entirely different from that of his predecessors. Two simple Biblical phrases added much to the document and brought his feelings in the matter of peace. "Righteousness exalteth a nation" and "Peace on earth, good will towards men" furnish the only foundations upon which can be built lasting achievements of the human spirit. The year has brought us the satisfaction of work well done and fresh visions of our duty which will make the work of the future better still. Truly a prophetic document!

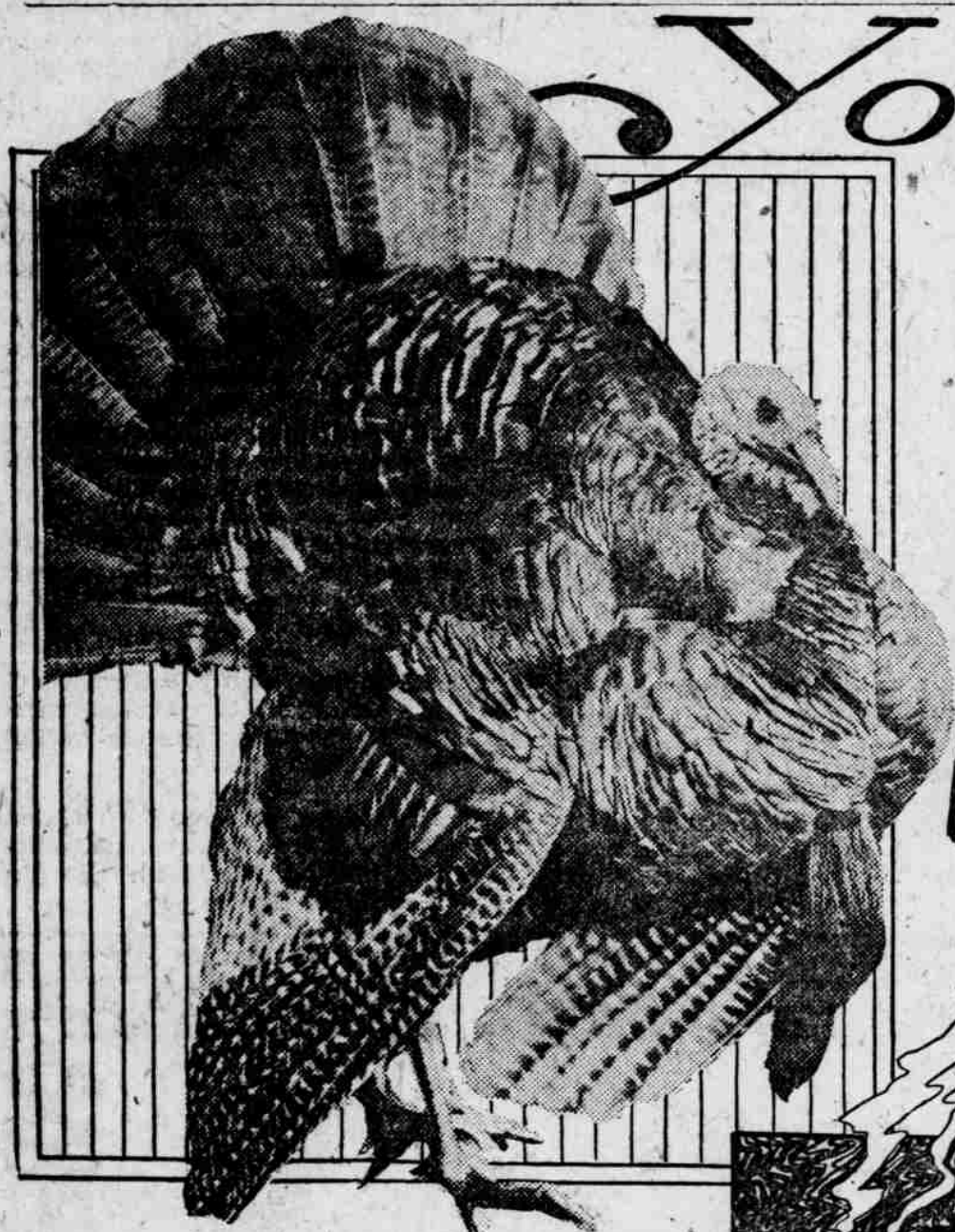
The early Presidents wrote the document in long hand while the recent Chief Executives dictated it to their secretaries. Washington and Madison used the old quill pen. Johnson used a stub pen and in signing the docu-

#### How The Documents Are Preserved.

It is interesting to know how the document is prepared and given to the public, and how each one is preserved for all time. After it has been written the original document is copied on the typewriter and the copies are given out to the newspapers throughout the country with a date of release; that is, a fixed time when it shall be published. Then it is sent to the Government printers and copies are typed on heavy official paper. The signature of the President is also in type and to the left of the signature and above the signature of the Secretary of State is the reservation for the Seal. These copies are sent to the Bureau of Archives where the custodian preserves them. The copies of the document are carefully kept on racks while the one bearing the official signature of the President is placed in a metal-lined wooden case, capable of protecting papers for centuries. The metal cases line the walls of the Bureau of Archives. Every year experts examine the cases to see that none of the old copies suffer from dry rot or other ailments to which even fine official paper is subject.

The signatures of the Presidents differ widely, for there one sees Lincoln's irregular letters, Grant's tiny signature, Arthur's bold handwriting, Roosevelt's queer, half legible letters, Taft's big characteristic subscription, and President Wilson's plain, straight signature. The splendid condition of the proclamations is due to the excellent care given them by the custodian of the archives, who guards them as carefully as a gardener watches his tender flowers.

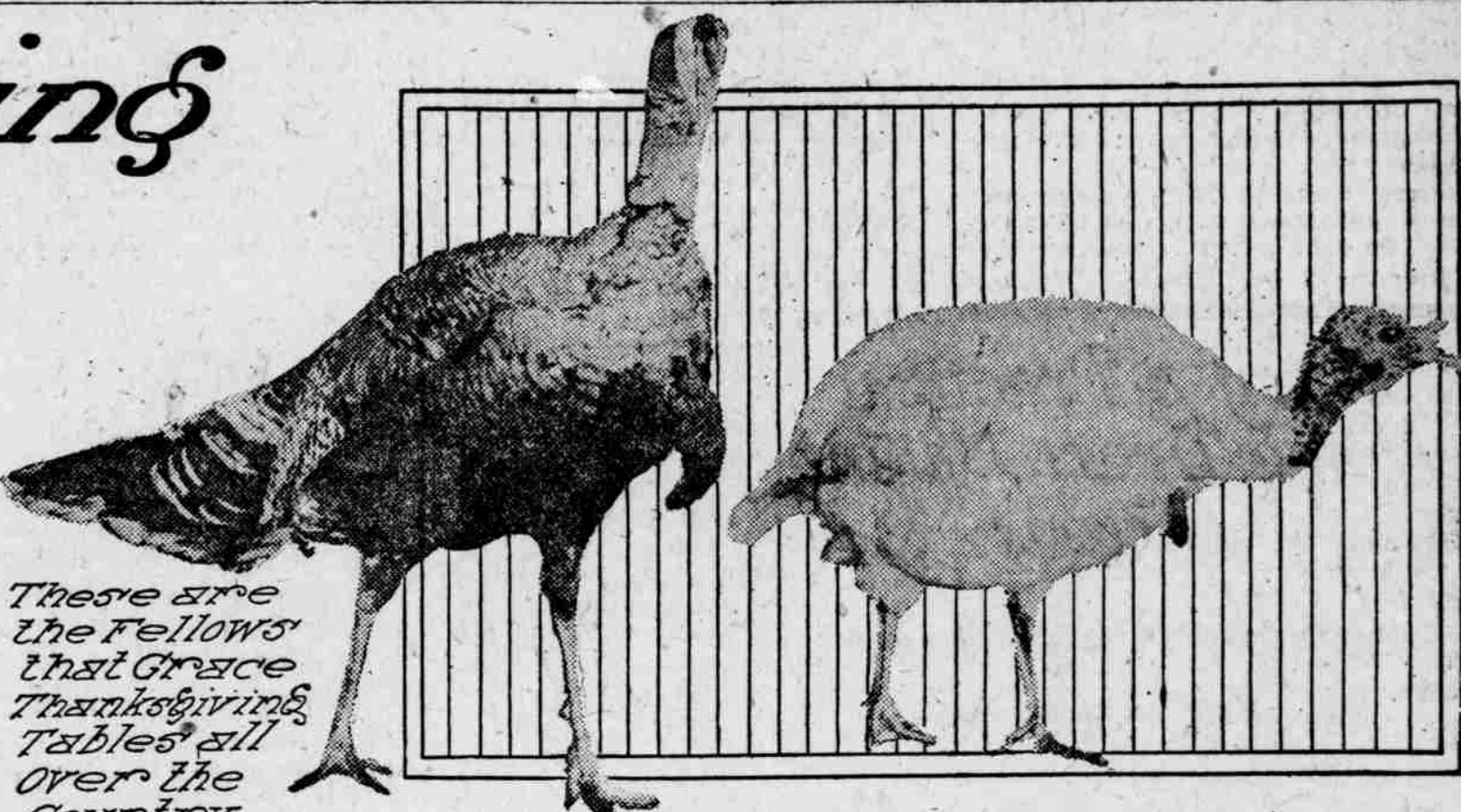
# Your Thanksgiving TURKEY



The Great American Bird



Driving a Flock of Turkeys to Market in Texas



These are the Flocks That Grace Thanksgiving Tables all Over the Country

### Outlook for This Year's Turkey Crop—Increase in Prices This Season—Various Varieties—Turkey Raising and the Turkey Market.

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ALTHOUGH we have not as yet complete figures from which to make exact quotations as to the turkey crop for the 1916 Thanksgiving," said Mr. Alfred R. Lee, of the Bureau of Poultry Investigations, U. S. Department of Agriculture, the other week, "all indications point to the usual full supply to meet the Thanksgiving and Christmas demand. There are five States from which the country gets its main supply of turkeys, with Texas leading the group. The latest statistics we have from these States give the yearly crop as follows: Texas, 360,000; Missouri, 312,000; Indiana, 293,000; Illinois, 189,000 and Kentucky 188,000. These figures are not likely to be far from this year's total, as there has been no marked change in the turkey out-

put from these States for several years.

"The Rhode Island turkey is now little more than a name, for but few are raised there. There are, however, turkeys in other States which have taken the name of Rhode Island turkey which has come to mean something as a trade name.

"With the season's normal crop of turkeys, with prices higher for all food products and with grain expensive, it is logical that the Thanksgiving bird will be slightly higher in price than last year.

"Ordinarily turkey-raising is a side line on farms, it being unusual to see a flock of over fifty on any one farm, except in Texas and in some portions of the far West, where flocks of several hundreds are, rather common. California and Oregon raise a goodly number of turkeys. There are in some States a few people who specialize in raising large flocks. The Imperial Valley of Southern California is a well-known turkey center.

#### "Turkey Day" in Texas.

"Marketing time for turkeys comes

but once a year from the middle of November to the latter part of December. Most turkey raisers sell their birds alive to turkey dealers, but the farmers near the city markets, particularly in the middle Atlantic and New England States, often dress their turkeys and sell them direct to the city dealers or to the consumers, and in this way command better prices.

"In some sections of the country, and particularly in Texas, the turkey raisers have what is called 'Turkey Day,' which is practically a great turkey market and comes some time before Thanksgiving. A few days prior to this event the turkey raisers bring their stock, either live or dressed, to the chosen center, and speculators go through the country buying up all they can gather. The fowls are brought in great droves of thousands, and people come for miles to see the 'turkey parades' at the central points. Flocks of turkeys are driven just like cattle, and six or eight men can drive a flock of a thousand birds ten or

twelve miles a day. But it is necessary to exercise great care, so that the birds may not become excited or be hurt.

"There are six varieties of domestic turkeys. Of these the most widely known is the Bronze, after which come the White Holland, Bourbon Red, Black, Narragansett and Slate. "We also have the wild turkey, still to be found in certain sections of the country, especially in the unsettled parts of Texas, New Mexico and Arizona and in the large swamps of the Gulf States—Florida and Mississippi. They are also occasionally to be found in West Virginia and in Maryland; but their number in those States is very small."

The main differences in the six standard varieties of domestic turkeys are size and color of plumage. The White turkey is the most popular fowl for table use and is the largest turkey grown. The Narragansett comes next in size, the Bourbon Red and Slate being medium in weight and the Black and White being smallest. Of late years so much improvement has been made in the size of both Whites and Blacks that general distinctions as to size are becoming difficult, since the season's products show many of these which tip the scales at over thirty pounds.

#### All Turkeys From Three Varieties.

It is the generally accepted view at the present time that all the turkeys of the world have descended in some way or other from the three earliest known varieties of domestic turkeys, the Black, the Bronze and the White.

The North American wild turkey is the original species of the Eastern

United States, known as Meleagris Americana. Its colors are black, beautifully shaded with a rich bronze, the breast plumage being dark bronze, illuminated with a lustrous finish of coppery green.

The wild turkey of Mexico, called by naturalists Meleagris Mexicana, is somewhat shorter in shank than the northern species, in body-color metallic black shaded with bronze, its tail and other feathers being tipped with white. This appears to be the first species taken to Spain and other parts of Europe. It is also believed that this fowl shows its influence on the variety of domestic turkeys known as the Narragansett.

The wild species known as the Honduras turkey, scientifically termed Meleagris Ocellata, from the eye-like markings, was originally a native of Honduras and other parts of Central America. The ground-color of the plumage of this bird is a beautiful bronze-green, banded with gold, bronze, blue and red, with some bands of brilliant black. The head and neck of this wild variety are naked and no breast tuft is present. Scientists deplore that this variety of turkey cannot be bred successfully as a domestic fowl in the northern climate.

There has been no dispute of the statement regarding the original transportation of the turkeys from America to Spain between the years 1518 and 1526. History also relates that they were introduced into England in 1524. Among the earliest recorded varieties of domestic turkeys is found the Black Norfolk and the large Cambridge turkey. Undoubtedly the turkey had been domesticated in this country prior to the recording

of those varieties in England.

#### Turkey Increasing in Popularity.

There has never been a more active demand for market turkeys than during the past ten years, and there is no reason why this should not increase very materially in the coming years with the growth of population.

The turkey is now used in many more ways than formerly. It is not only used for roasting but also to an increased extent as cold cuts for sandwiches and salads, and large numbers of poulters are used as broilers. No dish is more valued in large cities than the broiled poult.

Turkeys which are hatched early in the spring should grow to weigh from fourteen to twenty pounds by Thanksgiving. These weights are often exceeded by the best growers, but the question of profit from keeping turkeys simply resolves itself into the ability of the grower to bring them to marketable size.

The very large turkeys are not the most profitable either to grow or to sell. The medium class—from nine to eighteen pounds dressed—are most desirable for family use.

The Bronze turkey, probably a cross between the wild and the tame turkey, is the largest turkey purchased. The standard weight of the Bronze bird, which probably inherits both its bronze-tinted plumage and its weight from its wild progenitor, ranges from sixteen to thirty-six pounds according to age and sex. Probably more of this variety are grown each year than of all the others.

The Narragansett turkey comes next to the Bronze in size. It is of black ground color, each feather ending with a band of steel gray, edged with black. This imparts a grayish cast to the entire surface plumage.

Non of the several varieties of turkeys is more desirable than this for all purposes. The standard weights of the Narragansett birds are, for males, twenty to thirty pounds, according to age; for females, twelve to

#### Originally A Wild Variety.

The Bourbon Red—known also as Bourbon Butternut and Kentucky Red—is believed by some authorities to have been originally a wild form found in southern Iowa, Missouri, and Northern Arkansas. It has only lately become recognized by breeders as a standard variety. In color it is dark or brownish red, with white in wings and tail, tips of feathers bluish bronze, undercolor almost white, in some cases buff; in average weight it almost reaches that of the Bronze variety.

The Slate turkey is in color an ashy or slaty blue throughout, usually spotted with black, with the female generally of lighter color than the male. They are average size, the standard weights ranging from twelve pounds for a pullet to twenty-seven pounds for an old male.

The origin of the White Holland turkey is unknown. How they acquired the name of Holland is unknown, as they are not natural to Holland. In English poultry books they are referred to as "Austrian Whites," and have been reared in England for over a hundred years. White turkeys were formerly very delicate and rather small but with careful breeding with white sports from either the Bronze or Narragansett varieties, they have increased in size and vigor, although the admixture of blood has darkened the color of shanks and plumage.

The Black turkey was for a time almost forgotten and quite neglected, but of late more attention has been given it, greatly to its advantage and improvement along the lines of marketable qualities.

The Black turkey of today is almost large as the Bronze, and fully its equal in many ways. This is due to crosses made with Bronze turkeys and to proper selection thereafter. They dress to the most salable sizes, and by Thanksgiving the young stock, if properly cared for, will attain the live weight of from fourteen to twenty pounds.